

Application No.: 10/583,389
Amendment Dated July 14, 2008
Reply to Office action of May 13, 2008

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Please replace present drawing sheets 1/3, 2/3, and 3/3 with replacement sheets 1/3, 2/3, and 3/3 attached as the appendix to this paper.

REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Final Office Action dated May 13, 2008. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 are pending in the application. In the Final Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the Drawings and has rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 (second paragraph). However, the Examiner has indicated that Claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome these rejections. Accordingly, Applicants have amended the drawings and have amended independent Claims 1 and 5 to address these concerns. As a result of these amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to the drawings and the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 have hereby been overcome.

Objections to the Drawings

Applicants have amended FIG. 2 to remove reference character “32” and have amended FIG. 3 by exchanging reference characters “58.1” and “58.2” with each other and reference characters “59.1” and “59.2” with each other. As a result of these amendments, Applicants submit that the objections to the drawings have been overcome.

Rejection of the Claims

Applicants have amended independent Claims 1 and 5 to clarify the language of the claims pursuant to the Examiner’s comments. In general, Applicants have restructured the phrase “or an adjacent mining shield control device for inputting a control command” in Claim 1 and the phrase “or an adjacent mining shield control device to all of the mining shield control devices” in Claim 5 to remove confusion regarding the language of these claims. As a result, Applicants submit that these claims are no longer indefinite and the rejections of these claims have been overcome.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims of the present application are now in condition for allowance. It is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims be issued in due course. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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